

to see a herd of *Polygastrica* eating up the carmine, poking about the colouring matter with their pouted-out mouths like so many pigs.

In the vessel containing the *Volvox* there grew up some fuci of a green colour, which attained a length of an inch and a half in a few days. They sprung from the side of the vessel furthest from the light, while the *Volvox* congregated to the side nearest the light.

Whatever I have seen of the structure of the *Polygastrica* would lead me to adopt the views of M. Dujardin and Professor Rymer Jones in preference to those of Professor Ehrenberg.—EDWARD FORBES, May, 1840.

NOTES ON IRISH BIRDS.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER. *Picus major*, Linn.—On November 13, 1839, one of these birds (which are of very rare occurrence in Ireland) was shot at Castlereagh, near Belfast, by Mr. Greenfield, who remarks that it was “very tame,” and when fired at was engaged in pecking into a dead tree; it seemed to be unaccompanied by any of its species. It is a male bird, but not in adult plumage; and has been presented by the gentleman just named to the Belfast Museum.

AVOCET. *Recurvirostra Avocetta*, Linn.—The only allusion to the occurrence of this bird in Ireland that I am aware of is in Ruttý’s Natural History of the County of Dublin, in which work a specimen shot in Dublin Bay is particularly noticed. B. S. Ball, Esq., late of Youghal, informed me some time since, when looking over continental specimens of this bird along with him, that many years ago he shot an individual of the same species near that town.

SABINE’S SNIPE. *Scolopax Sabini*, Vigors.—About March 13, 1838, one of these rare birds was shot near Kinnegad, Westmeath, and at once brought to Dublin*. In the ensuing month of May I saw the specimen in the possession of Mr. Glennon, the well-known bird, &c. preserver in that city. Its measurements were

	inch.	lin.
Length (total)	11	3
— of bill above.....	2	7
— of tarsus	1	3½
— of middle toe and nail.....	1	4
— of wing from carpus	5	3

In plumage it was quite similar to the individuals hitherto described. Mr. W. S. Wall, a Dublin bird-preserver, who saw this specimen, then assured me that about nine years before a similar bird was, on

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EIDER DUCK. *Somateria mollissima*, Leach.—A few specimens of this bird purchased in different years in the Dublin market have been preserved by Mr. Glennon, and one individual has in a recent state been seen here by R. Ball, Esq., but I have been unable to ascertain with certainty whether they were obtained on the Irish coast, although in all probability they were so. The following note, which is satisfactory on this point, was kindly communicated to me by Dr. Farran of Dublin, on May 25, 1840 :—" On Saturday last I received a fine specimen of the male Eider alive from Mr. John King, Bre-more, Balbriggan; he saw it struggling to get up the rocks, and, attracted by its size and unusual plumage, got a boat and secured it: a severe injury which it had received in one of the thighs most likely prevented its rising."—W. THOMPSON, Belfast, June 1840.

NEW SPECIES OF *AGRILUS*.

The Rev. William Little has during the last summer (1839), among several other rare insects, discovered a species of *Agrilus* which appeared undescribed; and upon being submitted to the examination of Mr. Shuckard for the use of his work on the British Coleoptera, that entomologist considered it entirely new to science, and dedicated it to its discoverer. This insect was found in the vicinity of Rae Hills in Annandale, Dumfries-shire, during the month of June, on a willow (*S. auriculata* ?), confined to a locality not exceeding six yards in extent; about twenty specimens were captured.

The following are the characters and description from p. 244 of Shuckard's 'Elements of British Entomology.'

AGRILUS LITTLII, *Shuck.*

Granuloso-punctatus, capite thorace et corpore subtus cupreis; elytris viridibus. Length 4 lines.

Rather finely granulated; head, thorax, the underside of the body, antennæ, and legs of a coppery-red. Thorax undulated posteriorly, having a deep sinus opposite the centre of each elytron, another central one opposite the scutellum, and a deep central fossulet in front of the latter; the sides slightly rounded, depressed and margined, and with a small abbreviated carina just within each of its posterior angles.

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